

EDITORIAL

Muster the people's resistance to the US-Marcos II regime!

Carry armed struggle forward as the main task of the revolution!

THE FILIPINO PEOPLE ARE NOW burdened more than ever by soaring prices of basic goods and services, higher taxes, dwindling income, widespread unemployment, starvation, bureaucratic corruption and state fascism. The country is indeed in a continuing state of calamity but not due to the Covid-19 pandemic as Marcos Jr wants the public to believe, rather the moribund semicolonial and semifeudal system that has generated the Philippines' worst crisis since the overthrow of then Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. The impact of the crisis is very felt by

Negros masses who have long been overcome with suffering caused by over century-old oppressive conditions and they are eager to liberate themselves by means of social revolution.

There is a sense of *deja vu* in Negros now that another Marcos is in power and sugar crisis overshadows the island. *De facto* martial rule preying on activists, critics, political opponents and innocent civilians is also much reminiscent of the martial law years under dictator Marcos Sr. After 37 years, justice still eludes the families of victims of

the Escalante Massacre.

Akin to the connivance of Marcos Sr and his crony Roberto S. Benedicto who squeezed the sugar industry dry in the 1980s, the recent "sugar fiasco" blown up on mass media is a dance between greedy sugar barons and Marcos Jr as neocolonial chief fine-tuning his sway on the sugar industry to the best interests of the current ruling clique he represents.

They are callous toward hundreds of thousands of sugar workers, the biggest bulk in Negros. Farm workers are



chained to a monocrop sugar economy subservient to neoliberal policies yet run under the old hacienda system that has continued to oppress and exploit them. Sugar mill workers in Negros are distressed as well by growing contractualization amid sorry work conditions in the sugar centrals where two out of three mill workers are contractual workers with no access to benefits. The dire situation in Negros Island, as described by Bishop Antonio Fortich in the mid-1980s, is a seething "social volcano about to erupt" and it can only be freed through revolutionary armed struggle. Fearful of such truth, Marcos Jr repeats the fascist ways of his father and his predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte.

His Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief's declaration of "heightened operational tempo against insurgency" is a green light to state forces to perpetrate intensified abuses and atrocities in the countryside and urban areas disguised as destroying insurgency. Again another reminder of Marcos Sr's Martial Law. In Negros, *Ang Paghimakas* has already documented 45 cases of human rights abuses in the first three months of Marcos Jr namely massacres, extrajudicial killings threats and harassments, indiscriminate firing, abduction of farmers, attempted abduction of children, illegal arrests, illegal search and seizure, violation of rights of *hors de combat*, bombing and a bomb threat on the North Negros Natural Park. But other than neutralizing all forms of opposition, it is also ensuring unimpeded entry of multinational companies mainly engaged in mining, logging, real estate and agro-business.

The AFP's modus of declaring fake encounters to cover up

farmer killings is very alarming. In the cities of Guihulangan and Canlaon, after Marcos Jr took office, three incidents of fake encounters by the 62nd Infantry Battalion have occurred capitalizing on the murder of five farmers tagged as New People's Army (NPA) casualties. Meanwhile, peasant communities are terrorized by battalion-sized focused military operations.

The AFP, PNP, NTF-Elcac and Marcos Jr himself are also very dependent on deception in its desperation to curb the people's infinite support to the revolutionary movement. It promotes bounty hunting against supposed NPA cadres exploiting the people's poverty and hunger. Corruption runs deep in these institutions that have mastered siphoning people's taxes into their pockets through bloated budgets for modernization, the barangay development program, and rebel integration program.

Marcos Jr poorly imitates his father's statesman facade to swiftly monopolize political power and accumulate immense wealth. He is unsuccessful in obscuring his families' crimes and reviving their power to its former glory as state fascism and current socio-economic conditions reveal his hypocrisy to the masses.

The grave crisis offers an opportunity to further explain to the people imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. It is fertile ground for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the broadest number to oppose neoliberal policies, corruption, tyranny, fascist terrorism, systematic deception and historical revisionism. It creates favorable conditions for the revolutionary movement, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) at the lead, to muster the exploited classes of workers, peasants,

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ANG *Paghimakas*

Nagapasalamat ang *Ang Paghimakas* sa mga kontribusyon agud maging madinalag-on ang ini nga isyu. Sa pagpauswag sang aton *Ang Paghimakas*, ginapangabay sa tanan nga bumalasa nga padayon nga magamot sang mga balita, piktyur, istorya kag iban pa nga sinulat. Nagapangayo man kami sang inyo mga suhestyon kag komentaryo paano pa gid ini pauswagon.



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urban petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie towards intensifying the national democratic revolution through protracted people's war against the US-Marcos II regime.

The primary task of the revolutionary movement is to wage armed struggle. It emboldens the people to assert their sovereignty and democratic rights, and resist state fascism. Though secondary, it is of consequence and indispensable to also launch legal forms of struggles in the cities and countrysides.

Mass struggles such as rallies, protest actions, dialogues, strikes and petitions advance the economic and democratic demands of the people and further educate them politically. While the wage fight of sugar

workers in Negros is an economic struggle, it also takes a political form as it unmasks the undemocratic nature of the bourgeois state. Legal struggles prepare the people for higher forms of struggles and isolate the ruling Marcos clique and its military lackeys locally and internationally. It weakens the reactionary forces thus helping pave the way for further advances of armed struggle.

History has proven that Party cadres and Red commanders are borne out of those tempered in mass struggles. As state fascism intensifies it could only cultivate more fertile ground for revolutionary upsurge among the people. Martial rule, then and now, is an effective recruiter of the NPA.

The primary task of waging armed struggle is mainly implemented by the NPA. Red commanders and fighters must raise its material and combat capability by launching tactical offensives that persistently annihilate and disarm the enemy's combat forces, destroy its espionage network, and weaken and demoralize their ranks. The most abusive among them, especially those who owe blood debts to the people must be punished based on tenets of revolutionary justice. Moreover, there should also be political work within enemy ranks to win as many of them over to the side of the people. While their families are suffering from the socio-economic crisis, foot soldiers are infuriated as they are made into criminals by their top dogs.

The US-Marcos II regime is using the same tactics of its forerunners and, like previous neocolonial states, it is bound to disastrously fail. Meanwhile, revolutionary forces grasp firmly Marxism-Leninism-Maoism which gives scientific basis for revolutionary optimism that the chronic crisis of the world capitalist system brings its downfall closer. This revolutionary optimism drives revolutionary ranks to learn from history, militantly resist oppression and exploitation, and carry the revolutionary struggle forward. *RP*



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